

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2725

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

FOR AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SP US
SUBJECT: US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS--CONVERSATION WITH
UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA

REF MADRID 2660

1. AT LUNCH WITH ME ON APR 21, UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROVIRA SAID THAT HE SAW NO PROBLEM WITH POSTPONING THE NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL AFTER THE NATO MEETING IN BRUSSELS. HE BELIEVED LITTLE OR NO PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY MEETING IN MAY AND HE FORESAW NO DIFFICULTY IN HANDLING ANY PRESS INQUIRIES CONCERNING THE LACK OF A MAY SESSION. WHEN I MENTIONED TO HIM THAT I HAD DETECTED SOME UNHAPPINESS WITHIN THE GOVT ABOUT THE SLOW PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS (ALTHOUGH I DID NOT TELL HIM WHO IT WAS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVT HAD THIS MORNING EXPRESSED CONCERN ON THE SLOW TEMPO), ROVIRA SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THAT CORTINA HAD THE CONFIDENCE OF FRANCO AND ARIAS IN HANDLING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND WAS NOT PRESSURING HIM TO SPEED MATTERS UP.

2. ROVIRA MADE THE POINT THAT THE SPANISH GOVT FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO PREPARE THE
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GROUND FOR SOME FORM OF SPANISH LINK WITH NATO. THE

GOVT FULLY UNDERSTOOD ALL THE PROBLEMS AND REALIZED THAT IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT MUCH COULD BE ACHIEVED AT THE MAY NATO SUMMIT. THE GOS WAS HOPEFUL, OF COURSE, THAT SOME PROGRESS COULD BE REGISTERED, BUT IT ENTERTAINED NO PARTICULAR ILLUSIONS. SINCE THE GOS WAS ITSELF PERSUADED OF THE NEED FOR TIME, HE SAID IT WAS THE GOVT'S POSITION THAT IF IT WAS NECESSARY, AND THIS SEEMED LIKELY, THE AGREEMENT SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO THE END OF THE YEAR. IN RESPONSE TO MY SPECIFIC QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE GOS MIGHT EXPECT A QUID FOR THIS EXTENSION, ROVIRA SAID NO AND GAVE ME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS A GOVT POSITION.

3. ROVIRA ADMITTED THAT THE POSITION WHICH HE HAD GIVEN AT THE LAST FRIDAY SESSION OF THE 5TH ROUND, THAT IS, EITHER A NATO LINK OR A SHARP CUTBACK TO ONLY US-RELATED FACILITIES, WAS NOT A PRACTICAL ONE SINCE IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN US-RELATED FACILITIES AND NATO-RELATED FACILITIES. HOWEVER, MILITARY HAD BELIEVED IT NECESSARY TO STATE THIS POSITION AND THERE WERE CERTAIN PLACES WHERE SOME CUTBACK COULD TAKE PLACE. SPECIFICALLY, HE MENTIONED THE BARDENAS REALES RANGE WHICH HE UNDERSTOOD US-NATO COMMITTED UNITS IN GERMANY AND THE UK WERE USING EXTENSIVELY. I POINTED OUT TO ROVIRA THAT THERE WAS REALLY VERY LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE AND OTHER US UNITS STATIONED IN SPAIN WHICH WERE NATO-COMMITTED. ROVIRA ADMITTED THIS AND SAID THAT, AS WE WOULD RECALL, THIS WHOLE QUESTION WAS NEGOTIABLE.

4. WITH REGARD TO SPANISH ACTIVITY WITH OTHER NATO COUNTRIES, ROVIRA SAID THAT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, SPANISH EMBASSIES IN NATO CAPITALS HAD BEEN ASKED TO GIVE THEIR OWN ASSESSMENTS (WITHOUT APPROACHING GOVTS) OF ATTITUDES TOWARD SPANISH LINKS WITH NATO. MOST OF THE REPLIES HAD INDICATED THAT THERE WAS LITTLE PROSPECT FOR EARLY PROGRESS. IT WAS NOW PLANNED THAT WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR TEN DAYS CORTINA WOULD BEGIN A SERIES OF DEMARCHE TO AMBASSADORS OF NATO COUNTRIES IN MADRID WITH A VIEW TO PREPARING THE GROUND GRADUALLY FOR GREATER RECEPTIVITY TO SOME FORM OF LINK WITH SPAIN. DEPENDING ON THE OUTCOME OF THOSE DEMARCHE, THE GOS MIGHT THEN SEND A MISSION TO CERTAIN NATO

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CAPITALS.

5. IN THIS REGARD, ROVIRA REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRIP BY POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DE LOS ARCOS AND EUROPEAN DIRECTOR GENERAL AGUIRRE DE CARCER (REFTTEL) TO LONDON ON MAY 6 FOR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE BRITISH. ROVIRA SAID HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS PREMATURE SINCE HE DID NOT WANT TO PROVOKE A SPECIFICALLY NEGATIVE UK REACTION

PRIOR TO THE MAY NATO MEETING. HE WAS RECOMMENDING STRONGLY AGAINST THE TRIP TO CORTINA AND HE PROMISED TO LET ME KNOW THE DECISION. I TOLD ROVIRA THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE BRITISH ATTITUDE AT THIS TIME WAS A RATHER NEGATIVE ONE. I TOLD HIM THAT I WOULD INQUIRE OF THE DEPT WHETHER THE DEPT FELT A SPANISH APPROACH TO THE UK WOULD BE USEFUL AT THIS STAGE. ROVIRA SAID THIS WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL AS THE GOS WANTED TO MOVE ON THIS QUESTION IN CLOSE STEP WITH US. ACTION REQUESTED: I SHOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO MAKE ON THIS POINT TO PASS ON TO ROVIRA.

6. ROVIRA ALSO ALLUDED TO THE RECENT SPANISH CANCELLATION OF THE LETTER OF INTENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF 24 F-4'S. HE SAID THE REASON FOR THE CANCELLATION WAS STRICTLY A FINANCIAL ONE AND DID NOT BEAR ON THE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. COMMENT: IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE GOS IS QUITE WILLING TO HAVE THE NEGOTIATIONS MOVE FORWARD ON A SLOW TEMPO. I THINK THE REASON FOR THIS IS TWO-FOLD. THE FIRST IS THE FULL AWARENESS BY THE GOS THAT THE FORMULATION OF SOME NATO LINK WILL NOT BE AN EASY MATTER AND WILL TAKE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME BEYOND THE PERIOD OF THE VALIDITY OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT. THE SECOND REASON, ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT CLEARLY STATED, IS THE BELIEF THAT INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE NEXT MONTHS MAY OPEN UP NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR CLOSER SPANISH RELATIONS WITH EUROPE AND NATO. THIS VIEW COULD BE RELATED EITHER TO FRANCO'S DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE SCENE OR TO THEIR BELIEF THAT THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN SPAIN, INVOLVING THE NEW POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, MAY MAKE SPAIN MORE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

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